

NEWS

From the Office of

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County, Mojave Water Agency to Partner on Interpretive Center

SAN BERNARDINO – The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors on April 13 approved an agreement with the Mojave Water Agency to transfer surplus land to the agency in exchange for assistance in constructing a High Desert County Museum Interpretive Center.

“The Mojave Water Agency is an important partner in preserving our region’s water resources,” said Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt. “A critical component to preserving those resources is educating our youth about how to be good stewards of our natural resources, which the interpretive center will do.”

The Mojave Water Agency (MWA) approached the County regarding acquisition of a portion of a County-owned 74-acre parcel. MWA determined that the parcel would be suitable for the development of a new operations center facility and basin recharge site on the Mojave River. It was determined that MWA could use approximately 45 acres of the property for the construction of the proposed facility and that the remaining 29 acres could be used to develop a High Desert County Museum Interpretive Center.

Through the agreement approved by Supervisors, the County will transfer 45 acres to MWA and the County will retain ownership of the remaining 29 acres of land, on which MWA will construct an Interpretive Center in exchange for the land transfer. The 45-acre portion of the land was appraised to have a value of \$146,000. An equivalent amount will be invested into constructing the Interpretive Center.

“This arrangement clearly demonstrates the spirit of cooperation between the County and MWA,” said Mike Page, MWA Board President. “The Interpretive Center will serve as one more venue that we can use to educate our mutual constituents about our vital water resources.”

The Interpretive Center will include 500 to 1,000 feet of walking trails with ADA-compliant surfaces, five kiosks for interpretative displays, an amphitheater with overhead covering and seating capacity for 50 students, and four benches for pedestrian seating along the walking trails. A conference room in the operations center will also be available for use by students and students will be given tours of the operations center and recharge facility.

The Interpretive Center will be used to increase appreciation for the archeology, geology, biology, hydrology and history of the Mojave Desert, in addition to hydroelectric power, which will be displayed through a small generation facility at the site. MWA will also use the center to inform the public of its role in preserving the region’s water resources. The Interpretive Center will be used by the County’s Museum on the Road program, in coordination with the Victor Valley Museum. The Interpretive Center will also be available for use by local school districts and the general public.

The Interpretive Center is expected to be completed by mid-2011. The facility will be located between Deep Creek Road and the Mojave River, approximately three miles south of Rock Springs Road in unincorporated Apple Valley.